

HUD Awards Tucson \$9.825 Million to Revitalize the Martin Luther King Apartments

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development announced on May 17, 2005 that Tucson was one of seven public housing agencies across the country to receive a HOPE VI Revitalization grant. The \$9.825 million grant will be used, along with other funding, to revitalize the aging public housing units at the Martin Luther King Apartments and create both the new Depot Plaza mixed-income development in the downtown Rio Nuevo District and another new mixed-income community near the Silverbell golf course.

“This funding gives Tucson the opportunity to improve the lives of the residents in this public housing development and create a community that thrives,” said HUD Secretary Alphonso Jackson. “This is only possible when a housing authority lives up to its responsibility of building the affordable housing in a timely manner.” The City’s Community Services Department has successfully completed two other HOPE VI community developments in the Santa Rosa and South Park neighborhoods.

The new Depot Plaza complex will have 168 residential units with retail on the first floor fronting Congress Street and secure parking on site. Sixty-eight of the units will be public housing for the elderly and disabled. Partnering with the City on Depot Plaza is Congress Street Redevelopment, a local group of business people active in rejuvenating the downtown.

The Silverbell property is being developed in conjunction with Pathway Developments, another local private sector firm, which will construct 105 market rate homes on the site. Community Services will build 28 public housing units for the elderly and disabled scattered throughout the development and designed to blend with the market rate homes.

When finished, all the 96 public housing units in the existing Martin Luther King Apartments, which will be demolished, will be replaced either at Depot Plaza or at Silverbell. Martin Luther King residents will be given the choice to live at Depot Plaza, Silverbell, other public housing or to take a housing choice voucher and reside in private rental housing.

Total public and private investment for the Martin Luther King revitalization is estimated at over \$48 million.